

The Perfect Cow

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Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

Rav Volender, the Rov of the Jerusalem Prison, had just finished giving his morning shiur to the prisoners. It was a beautiful day outside, so Rav Volender walked through the park. He loved listening to the birds singing different songs and it always put him in a happy mood. Suddenly, the mooing of a cow startled him. "A cow in the park? That can't be," thought Rav Volender to himself. The only way that could be possible was if... no, it couldn't be...

But sure enough, as Rav Volender turned the corner, there he was... none other than Tzadok "HaTzadik", with his old sign advertising his "segulot." And to Rav Volender's surprise – well, maybe he shouldn't have been surprised; it was Tzadok after all – there was Tzadok right next to a cow and he was painting it red!

"Tzadok, Tzadok," said Rav Volender as he approached. "I thought we had agreed that you were done with this silly stuff."

"Rav Volender!" cried Tzadok, jumping up to greet his Rov, as the cow gave a loud annoyed moo. "How great it is to see you! And you've come just in time! Look! I have a Parah Adumah!"

"Um, Tzadok," said Rav Volender looking at the half painted cow. "This isn't a Parah Adumah. It's just a cow that you're painting red."

"But I looked everywhere in the Torah, and in the Zohar too!" protested Tzadok. "And I didn't find anywhere where it says a Parah Adumah can't be painted red."

"Well, it can't," said Rav Volender. "I'd be happy to learn the Halachos of Parah Adumah with you. But why on earth do you need a Parah Adumah?"



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Tzadok looked shocked. “Why do I need a Parah Adumah?” he asked incredulously. “A Parah Adumah is the most choshuv thing that a person can own! And besides I’m going to sell the milk, which is bound to be a segulah for something, and I am also going to sell rides for kids. You know, riding on something so holy will make you kadosh just like a Parah Adumah!”

“Uh, Tzadok,” said Rav Volender. “Don’t you know that if someone rides on a Parah Adumah, the cow becomes possul? A Parah Adumah has to be watched very carefully every day to make sure nothing goes wrong. Even if you put down your paintbrush on its back for one second, it would make it possul; it would be ruined!”

“The Parah Adumah is only special when it is carefully watched that nothing should passul it, and it has to be watched until it is finally shechted and burned in the right way.”

“Shechted and burned?!?!?” exclaimed Tzadok, horrified, as he gave the cow a tight hug, getting wet paint all over his clothes. “How could you say such a thing? What will this beautiful cow be worth if it’s burned to ashes?!”

“Tzadok,” said Rav Volender gently. “Let me tell you a very important lesson that the Parah Adumah is teaching us. You know, of course, that a Yid’s true purpose is Olam Haba, right?”

“How do we get to Olam Haba? The only way to get there is by spending our lives properly, watching ourselves that we shouldn’t do aveiros and filling our days as much as possible with mitzvos and learning Torah.

“Just like the Parah Adumah is only valuable if it’s guarded carefully according to the instructions in the Torah, so too a Yid cannot get to Olam Haba unless he spends his life exactly according to the instructions

provided by the Torah. And just like the Parah Adumah becomes most valuable only after it dies; it’s only after a person has lived properly, when it seems to us that it’s all over, that’s when the fun of Olam Haba begins!”

“That sounds so hard,” said Tzadok. “To be careful my whole life? Is there a segulah that can help me with that?”

Rav Volender paused. “In fact there is,” he said after a moment, reaching into the bag he was holding.

“Here,” he said, handing a sefer to Tzadok. “This is a Mesillas Yesharim. If you learn a few minutes every day from this sefer – that will definitely be a segulah for you to be a Ben Olam Haba. Because a sefer like this teaches you how to keep far away from making mistakes that could ruin a person. And it teaches you how to become better and better every day.”

“Wow!” said Tzadok. “I’m going to learn this sefer every day and try to do everything it says! And then my Parah Adumah and I can go to Olam Haba together!”

“Tzadok,” said Rav Volender. “Olam Haba is for people, not cows.”

“No cows?” asked Tzadok, hugging the cow again. “But won’t I be bored in Olam Haba without my friend?”

“Bored? In Olam Haba?” Rav Volender laughed. “Tzadok, Olam Haba is the most wonderful place to be - you’ll be too happy there to be bored.”

“Oh wow, then I had better get working on getting ready for Olam Haba!” said Tzadok, as sat down next to the cow with his Mesillas Yesharim and began to learn.

To be continued next week...

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!

Takeaway:

The mitzvah of Parah Adumah which seems to be so mysterious is teaching us something we must always keep in mind. We are here in this world to prepare for the happiness of the next world. After it seems like it’s all over, that’s the most valuable thing.



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